

PROJECT DESCRIPTION
DUNCAN CREEK RESERVOIR MAINTENANCE – T 11S, R 03E, SEC 35 (#300418)

BACKGROUND

This project was also proposed for maintenance as a part of the 2001 Decision package under project #309634. It is an impoundment across the upper part of Duncan Creek, which is ephemeral. The proposal in the EA was to haul in bentonite to improve water retention, however, an inspection in September 2003 indicated that the reservoir was dry during a series of low snowpack years, captured what runoff was available, and was not necessarily leaking water. The project was addressed in the EA for the Northwest Allotment permit renewal, and received full clearance for cultural, wildlife, and botanical resources in 2002 and 2003. The project has a water right license from IDWR for 0.25 acre-feet. As far as I know, the work was not completed at that time, but clean out of sediment in the reservoir was also authorized in 1990-1991. Simplot has asked that we include this project in the package for this year.

WHO

Dickshooter Cattle Co. (permittee) retains a grazing permit in the Northwest Allotment of the Bruneau Field Office, BLM. The permittee proposes to clean accumulated sediment from the reservoir to improve the reservoir's water-holding capacity while the reservoir is completely dry and is amenable to completion of the work. The project dates from 1958. The permittee has been assigned maintenance of this reservoir in 1995 as a condition of the permit transfer and will cooperate with BLM in performance of required maintenance activities.

WHAT

Maintenance activities would include removing sediment from the bottom of the reservoir using a bulldozer to displace the sediment. The sediment would be spread out and pushed on to the berm and sides of the pond. All earth work would occur in areas previously disturbed by impoundment construction. Care would be taken to avoid breaking the seal in the excavation area, in particular, to avoid the need to use bentonite to reestablish the seal. Bentonite is absorbent clay consisting mostly of Montmorillonite. The extent of the disturbed area would not exceed 5 acres.

WHEN

Prior to September 15, 2014. The timing will be constrained by a combination of factors, but especially by continuing dryness of the proposed treatment area, equipment and operator availability, and completion of BLM clearances and/or availability of BLM staff. Wet conditions would create unacceptable risk of delay in completion or even of equipment loss.

WHERE

Maintenance work would be done at the existing reservoir located in the Northeast of the Southwest quarter of Section 35, Township 11 South, Range 3 East. The project map depicts the location of the reservoir and access route. The equipment operator could access the reservoir along the 2-track way from the east, and walk the dozer in from an unloading point on the main road.

Figure 3. Reservoir Maintenance Location and Access Overview



HOW

Work would be performed with a bulldozer (Figure 2). Equipment would access the reservoir along an existing route from the Wickahoney Road (Figure 1). The bulldozer would be transported on a low boy trailer to a staging area along the Wickahoney Road, or possibly at the first junction or closer. The operator would then drive the bulldozer along the remainder of the route to the reservoir. The probable area of surface disturbance at the reservoir maintenance site would not exceed 5 acres. The dimensions of the finished project would retain up to 0.25 acre feet per year of surface water, per the terms of the claimed water right.

The following maintenance stipulations would be in effect:

1. All earth work will occur within the original area of disturbance.
2. Excavation will avoid a depth that will break seal in pit. Bentonite may be necessary to restore seal if broken.
3. Disturbed areas will be graded to resemble existing landscape contours to minimize visual contrast.
4. Maintenance work will be restricted to periods when the soil is dry and firm enough to support vehicles without creating ruts.
5. No new roads or blading will be allowed in moving equipment to the reservoir site.



Figure 2. Example of Bulldozer (D8)